

## BLOGGING: THE NEW FRONTIER OF FASHION REPORTING

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The Fashion Blog. It's become the pastime of many self-proclaimed "fashionistas", a wide-open press medium for hungry publicists, and the nemesis of the old-guard fashion editor.

With magazine titles folding faster than bloggers can type, it's no wonder there's tension in the front rows at Fashion Week - between the editors who've rightfully earned their seat, and the (often times very young) bloggers sitting beside them.

Fashion blogging has made its mark in the last few years, with its meteoric rise taking place over the past 18 months. Some of those who've shot to the top include 13 year-old Tavi Gevinson of Style Rookie, 18 year-old Jane Aldridge of Sea of Shoes and 23 year-old BryanBoy. There are also photo-bloggers that have experienced sudden fame, including Scott Schuman ([thesartorialist.com](http://thesartorialist.com)), Garance Dore ([garancedore.com](http://garancedore.com)), Todd Selby ([theselby.com](http://theselby.com)) and Tommy Ton ([jakandjil.com](http://jakandjil.com)).

To understand, there are a few different types of fashion blogs. Many of those causing the stir are hosted by fashion-savvy teens and young adults who simply have fun with fashion – they comment on designer collections, their daily ensembles and shopping conquests – but have no true professional experience in the field. The others, mostly generated by magazines and other notable fashion news outlets, are more fact-based, newsworthy sites that report on the trends, happenings, and gossip within the realm of fashion.

In 2009, bloggers had the largest impact on fashion to date. They influenced everything from print publishing to how brands market themselves online to how publicists approach PR outreach of brands. There are thousands of style-related blogs on the web these days, but those dedicated to their craft have earned a rightfully earned a solid reputation in the industry.

Tavi Gevinson ([StyleRookie](http://StyleRookie)), Bryan Boy ([BryanBoy](http://BryanBoy)), Scott Schuman ([The Sartorialist](http://TheSartorialist)) and Garance Dore ([Garance Dore](http://GaranceDore)) have earned recognition from industry giants Marc Jacobs, Rodarte and Burberry, and leading publications

such as *Vogue*, *GQ*, *Elle* and *Teen Vogue*. They've participated in fashion design collection collaborations and received front-row, international Fashion Week seats next to some of the most notable figures in the couture world.

Herein lies the controversy. With bloggers scoring seats in the first three rows at the most notable fashion shows in New York and internationally, the fashion editors who've spent years honing their craft to earn those seats are taking notice, and feeling the pinch.

Additionally, designers suffer the fate of criticism at the hands of the unaccountable – these bloggers, unlike say magazines, are not going to suffer a loss of advertising if they offer up disapproving opinions of a collection. Says designer Christopher Kane: "It's a bit mad, isn't it? It feels like it's happened all of a sudden and at some shows this season the front row was just all bloggers. I think it will die down though, and people know what they are doing. No one who wants to read a serious review of a show is going to look at what a 14-year-old thinks. But it has become more critical; people can say what they want about anyone on a blog without consequences and that's quite scary. There are real repercussions for a designer if a photo of something is leaked by a blog; it can be copied in a fortnight and that can really harm a business. You have to be much more careful now." As reported by British *Vogue*.

In a piece from veteran fashion writer Cathy Horyn of *The New York Times*, she writes, "...pesky bloggers – to whom fashion houses threw open their doors in the unexamined belief that their presence was good for marketing – are downloading every scrap of information as fast as they can. They have overrun the ivory tower."

At the 2009 Spring Collections last September, it became a fact that more seats were reserved in rows 1-3 (the famed area typically reserved for fashion's top brass, editors and celebrities) for bloggers from Fashionista, Fashiontoast, Fashionologie and Fashionair among others, and fewer seats for reporters from regional newspapers who can no longer afford the expense of covering the runways independently.

If you think blogging is all just for fun and this silly nonsense of bloggers over-running the front row will soon pass, think again. Blogging can be quite profitable, thanks to something called affiliate marketing. Affiliate marketing is an Internet-based marketing practice in which a business rewards one or more affiliates for each visitor or customer brought about by the affiliate's marketing efforts. Smart bloggers will maximize their revenues by blogging about those products that pay handsomely – and the more followers these bloggers have, the bigger the payday. For instance, if a blogger covers a product and includes a link to where you can buy that product online, those sites then give the blogger a cut of the profits for the recommendation.

Additionally, bloggers had been getting paid for just simply mentioning products, however, in October 2009, the FTC passed new regulations that require bloggers to disclose when something they're writing about is actually free swag a company sent them for publicity. That said, the FTC would impose fines on people who so much as tweet about products they are getting paid to endorse without mention of the fact they are doing so.

Another move thrusting the bloggers importance forward was the announcement in February from the Council of Fashion Designers of America (CFDA), stating that a select group of key bloggers will be incorporated into the panel of CFDA members, stylists and editors who will choose the 2010 CFDA award winners.

To round things out, *Vogue* Magazine's Anna Wintour – notably the fashion industry's most influential person - had been curiously silent about the blog phenomenon, until recently. The March 2010 issue offered a six-page spread featuring seven influential bloggers, in a very favorable light.

The tide seems to be turning...and maybe the front row can squeeze in just a few more seats, to make room for the "new guard" of fashion reporting.

### **Top Fashion Blogs:**

Fashionista  
[www.fashionista.com](http://www.fashionista.com)

The Sartorialist  
[www.thesartorialist.blogspot.com](http://www.thesartorialist.blogspot.com)

Style Rookie

[www.tavi-thenewgirlintown.com](http://www.tavi-thenewgirlintown.com)

Garance Dore

[www.garancedore.fr](http://www.garancedore.fr)

Sea of Shoes

[www.seaofshoes.com](http://www.seaofshoes.com)

New York Magazine's The Cut

<http://nymag.com/daily/fashion/>

Bryanboy

[www.bryanboy.com](http://www.bryanboy.com)

Fashionologie

[www.fashionologie.com](http://www.fashionologie.com)

Tommy Ton

<http://www.jakandjil.com/blog>

Who What Wear

<http://www.whowhatwear.com>

### **Related Articles:**

[Fashion's New Fever: Bloggers in Spotlight As They Aim for Fame](#)

Women's Wear Daily, February 17, 2010

[Why So Stodgy, Prada.com?](#)

The New York Times, December 31, 2009

[Blogger's Crash Fashion's Front Row](#)

The New York Times, December 27, 2009

[Bryanboy.com - Great Expectations](#)

[http://www.vogue.com/voguediaries/2010\\_March\\_Style\\_Bloggers/?load=2010\\_March\\_Style\\_Bloggers](http://www.vogue.com/voguediaries/2010_March_Style_Bloggers/?load=2010_March_Style_Bloggers)

Vogue Video on the shoot for Logged On – March 2010 Issue